

ELECTION COMMISSION OF INDIA
NIRVACHAN SADAN, ASHOKA ROAD, NEW DELHI – 110001

No.4/2020/SDR/VOL-I

Dated: 9th October, 2020

To,

The President/General Secretary of
the recognized National/State Political Parties

Subject: Campaign during the period of pandemic COVID-19-reg.

Sir/Madam,

Election Commission of India has announced the schedule for conduct of the General Elections to the Legislative Assembly of the State of Bihar on 25.09.2020 (Press Note No. ECI/PN/64/2020) and of the Bye-Elections of various State on 29.09.2020 and 05.10.2020.

2. It would be recalled that on 21.08.2020, Election Commission issued broad guidelines setting the paradigm for the conduct of elections during the period of COVID-19 after taking inputs from political parties and Chief Electoral Officers of the States/UTs. These guidelines were widely circulated and are available at <https://eci.gov.in/files/file/12167-broad-guidelines-for-conduct-of-general-electionbye-election-during-covid-19/>.

3. Further, Election Commission on 7.10.2020, after wide ranging consultations in Bihar during its visit from 29.09.2020 to 01.10.2020 with National/State Political Parties, Senior Officers of the State, CEO, DEOs, SPs, etc. and deliberations in Delhi with a view to ensuring the conduct of **free, fair, peaceful, transparent, ethical and safe** elections during COVID-19, Commission has **revised the norms concerning Star Campaigners for all ongoing and future elections during the period of pandemic COVID-19** in the following

manner **with immediate effect**: (<https://eci.gov.in/files/file/12343-revised-guidelines-of-star-campaigners-for-elections-held-during-the-period-of-pandemic-regarding/>)

- 1) The **maximum limit** on the number of star campaigners for recognized National/State political parties **shall be 30 in place of 40** and for unrecognized registered political parties it **shall be 15 in place of 20** during the period of pandemic.
- 2) Accordingly, **the period of submission** of the list of star campaigners is extended **from 7 days to 10 days from the date of notification**. Political parties, which have already submitted a list of star campaigners shall resubmit a revised list within the stipulated period.
- 3) Request for permission for the campaigning by star campaigners shall be submitted to the district election authorities **at least 48 hours** before the start of campaign so that all necessary safety measures are put in place by all concerned stakeholders well in time.

4. COVID-19 pandemic has affected the electoral process world over. In these challenging times, COVID-19 related guidelines issued by MHA, Ministry of Health & Family Welfare and State/UT Governments from time to time have prescribed detailed preventive measures including wearing of masks, use of sanitizers, observance of social distancing at all stages wherever public interface in physical form is involved. Observance of these preventive measures is a duty cast upon all the stakeholders in the larger interest of public health. This would require advance planning, prior permission from the district authorities, massive awareness activities, and ensuring strict discipline by all concerned. As representatives of public, this onerous responsibility rests with the political parties to ensure that they not only cooperate with the district machineries in following the due norms of

public health safety as prescribed, but also instill a sense of discipline for civic behavior in their cadre while doing ground management during campaign times. It is requested that you may like to issue advisory to all your field representatives to demonstrate utmost vigil and care to abide by all the extant instructions in larger interest of public health and avoid any penal action for breaching the provisions.

5. District Election machinery is making all necessary electoral arrangement, taking into account safety requirements, as directed by Commission. However, as an important stakeholder of electoral process, you are requested to demonstrate the utmost vigil and care during the period of campaign in larger interest of public health.

6. Election Commission is confident that it will receive fullest cooperation from political parties in this regard.

Yours faithfully,


(N T Bhutia)
Secretary

Copy to: - The Chief Electoral Officers of all States and UTs with the request that a copy of this letter may be sent to all registered political parties with headquarters in the State/UT including the State Units of the recognized National and State Parties.